

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

507
C1
Claim 1 (currently amended): An answering machine detection method for a voice message delivery system comprising the steps of:

- (a) placing an outbound call to a Recipient;
- (b) detecting a telephone line pick-up; and
- ~~_____ (c) detecting a difference at a voice message server between an existing answering machine telephone line pick-up and a live Recipient telephone line pick-up.~~
- _____ (c) playing a prompt; and
- _____ (d) determining, at a voice message server, that the telephone line pick-up was by an existing answering machine if there is talk-over during the playing of the prompt.

91
Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 2, ~~and~~ 1 further comprising the steps of:

- ~~(de)~~ waiting for silence if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~ the existing answering machine;
- ~~(ef)~~ playing a message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~ the existing answering machine; and
- ~~(fg)~~ playing a message if the telephone line pick-up was by a live Recipient.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 3, ~~and~~ further comprising the steps of:

- ~~(gh)~~ detecting talk-over during playing of the message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~ the existing answering machine; and
- ~~(hi)~~ restarting the playing of the message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~ the existing answering machine and talk-over is detected during playing of the message.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 3, wherein step (ef) comprises:

~~(e)~~ playing a first message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~the existing answering machine;

and further wherein step (fg) comprises:

~~(f)~~ playing a second message different from the first message if the telephone line pick-up was by the live Recipient.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 3, wherein step (fg) comprises:

~~(f)~~ playing a message and playing at least one interactive option if the telephone line pick-up was by the live Recipient.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 3, wherein step (fg) comprises:

~~(f)~~ playing at least one interactive reject option, playing a message, and playing at least one interactive option if the telephone line pick-up was by the live Recipient.

Claim 8 (currently amended): ~~The~~An answering machine detection method of ~~Claim 1,~~ wherein ~~step (e) comprises:~~for a voice message delivery system comprising the steps of:

(a) placing an outbound call to a Recipient;

(b) detecting a telephone line pick-up;

(c) playing, by a voice message server, a first voice message to the Recipient;

(e1d) playing, by the voice message server, a ~~prompt~~second voice message, different from the first voice message, that requests a touch-tone input from the Recipient; and

(e2) listening for the requested touch-tone input;

(e3e) determining the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an existing answering machine~~a live Recipient if the requested touch-tone input is ~~heard~~received at the voice message server.

Claim 9 (currently amended): ~~The~~An answering machine detection method of Claim 1, wherein step (e) ~~comprises: for a voice message delivery system comprising the steps of:~~

- ~~(a)~~ placing an outbound call to a Recipient;
- ~~(b)~~ detecting a telephone line pick-up;
- ~~(e1c)~~ playing a prompt that requests, by a voice message server, a specific speech input from the Recipient; and
- ~~(e2)~~ listening for the requested specific speech input;
- ~~(e3d)~~ determining the telephone line pick-up was by an existing answering machine a live Recipient if the requested specific speech input is heard received at the voice message server.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 21, wherein step (c1) comprises:

- ~~(e1)~~ playing at the prompt within one second of detecting at the telephone line pick-up.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 21, wherein step (c1) comprises:

- ~~(e1a)~~ detecting voice energy after detecting at the telephone line pick-up; and
- ~~(e1b)~~ playing at the prompt within one second of detecting the voice energy.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 21, wherein step (c1) comprises:

- ~~(e1a)~~ detecting voice energy and the an end of voice energy after detecting at the telephone line pick-up; and
- ~~(e1b)~~ playing at the prompt within one second of detecting the end of the voice energy.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 21, wherein step (c1) comprises:

- ~~(e1)~~ playing a prompt that introduces at the outbound call to a live Recipient.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The answering machine detection method of Claim 21, wherein step (c1) comprises:

- ~~(e1)~~ playing a prompt that introduces at the outbound call to a live Recipient by playing a prompt selected from the group consisting of: "This is a message from [Sender's name]."; "This is a call from [Sender's name]."; and "[Sender's name] has sent you a message."

Claim 15 (currently amended): An apparatus for detecting an answering machine for a voice message delivery system ~~including~~comprising a ~~TeleMail S~~voice message server connectable to a telephone communications system, wherein the ~~TeleMail S~~voice message server operates to:

- (a) place an outbound call to a Recipient;
- (b) detect a telephone line pick-up; and
- ~~(c) detect a difference at a voice message server between an existing answering machine telephone line pick-up and a live Recipient telephone line pick-up.~~
- (c) play a prompt; and
- (d) determine that the telephone line pick-up was by an existing answering machine if there is talk-over during the playing of the prompt.

Claim 16 (cancelled)

91
Cont
Claim 17 (currently amended): The apparatus for detecting an answering machine for a voice message delivery system of Claim ~~16~~15, wherein the ~~TeleMail S~~voice message server additionally operates to:

- ~~(de)~~ wait for silence if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~the existing answering machine;
- ~~(ef)~~ play a message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~the existing answering machine; and
- ~~(fg)~~ play a message if the telephone line pick-up was by a live Recipient.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The apparatus for detecting an answering machine for a voice message delivery system of Claim 17, wherein the ~~TeleMail S~~voice message server additionally operates to:

- ~~(gh)~~ detect talk-over during playing of the message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~the existing answering machine; and
- ~~(hi)~~ restart the playing of the message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~the existing answering machine and talk-over is detected during playing of the message.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The apparatus for detecting an answering machine for a voice message delivery system of Claim 17, wherein the ~~TeleMail-S~~voice message server in step (ef) operates to:

(e) play a first message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~an~~the existing answering machine;

and further wherein the ~~TeleMail-S~~voice message server in step (fg) operates to:

(f) play a second message different from the first message if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~a~~the live Recipient.

Claim 20 (currently amended): The apparatus for detecting an answering machine for a voice message delivery system of Claim 17, wherein the ~~TeleMail-S~~voice message server in step (fg) operates to:

(f) play ~~a~~the message and play at least one interactive option if the telephone line pick-up was by ~~a~~the live Recipient.

Claim 21 (cancelled)